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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [NP](#)
SUBJECT: MAOISTS END CEASE-FIRE

REF: A. 05 KATHMANDU 1958
[1](#)B. 05 KATHMANDU 2685
[1](#)C. KATHMANDU 3

Classified By: Ambassador James Moriarty, Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

[1](#)1. (U) This cable contains an action request. See paragraph [1](#)9.

Summary

[1](#)2. (C) On January 2, the Maoists announced the end to their four month unilateral cease-fire, claiming the government "compelled" them to do so in "self-defense." The Maoists said action would be directed toward the "autocratic royal regime" and the municipal elections scheduled for February 8. Maoists detonated bombs causing property damage but no injuries in the municipalities of Pokhara, Butwal and Bhairawa on January 2, just hours after withdrawing their cease-fire. The Maoists and seven-party alliance both reiterated their commitment to the November 22, 12-point understanding. Parties had urged the Maoists to extend the cease-fire, and blamed the government's refusal to reciprocate as "forcing" the Maoists to resume violence. Local human rights activists also blamed the government for the Maoists ending the cease-fire, and worried about the erosion of civil liberties by both Maoists and the government. End Summary.

Maoists End Cease-fire

[1](#)3. (U) On January 2, Maoist leader Prachanda issued a press statement saying his party was "compelled" to withdraw its four month cease-fire "as the government continued its military operations even during the period of unilateral cease-fire." Citing military operations being carried out by the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA) in Rolpa District, and actions against Maoist cadre in other parts of the country, Prachanda said that to continue the cease-fire was "not only impossible but would also be suicidal." He noted that Maoist actions would be directed toward the "autocratic royal regime" and the municipal elections scheduled for February 8. He also expressed a commitment to assist the ongoing movement of the seven-party alliance per the November 22, 12-point understanding between the Parties and the Maoists. The Maoists thanked the international community for its appreciation of their cease-fire and requested "UN agencies,

international organizations, and the world's population" to support the Maoist mission to "end cruelty against the human rights of Nepali citizens." (Note: The cease-fire was first announced on September 3 for three months (ref A) and then extended for one month on December 2 (ref B). End note.)

Seven-Party Alliance Holds Government Responsible

14. (U) The seven-party alliance on January 2 held the government responsible for forcing the Maoists to resume violence. CPN-UML General Secretary MK Nepal said, "the state must take responsibility as its refusal to respond to the cease-fire positively has resulted in the recurrence of violence." MK Nepal noted that "the cease-fire has collapsed despite our efforts, but we urge the Maoists to respect human rights, humanitarian laws and the laws of war." At an emergency meeting at GP Koirala's residence earlier on January 2, the Parties had called on the Maoists not to resume violence. In a joint statement, the leaders said, "we urge Maoists to avoid violent activities against unarmed innocent people, respecting the people's desires for democracy and human rights." They also called on the insurgents to remain committed to implementing the 12-point understanding. The statement noted that the cease-fire was useful in initiating a process to bring the rebels to peaceful politics through the 12-point understanding. "But the state forced them by attacking the rebels in various places," the statement concluded. The Parties also thanked the international community for support of democracy and peace in the country, and called on external powers not to provide any arms or military assistance to the present "autocratic" government.

Synchronized Bombs Spell Return of Maoist Violence

15. (C) The Maoists detonated bombs in the municipalities of Pokhara, Butwal and Bhairawa on January 2, just hours after Maoists announced the end of their four-month unilateral cease-fire. While there were no reports of injuries, the bombs caused property damage. Dilip Bhattarai, member of the American Corner in Bhairawa, told Emboff that there were three bomb blasts in Bhairawa and three more in Butwal (both cities are in Rupandehi District) at two to three minute intervals at about 6:45 p.m. local time. He said the District Education Office in Bhairawa was badly damaged and that "the explosion was so powerful that my house at a distance of 500 meters from the explosion was terribly shaken." Maoists targeted a ward office of the municipality in Butwal, briefly detaining a watchman, whom they released uninjured. The bomb in Pokhara went off at about 7:30 PM local time near the private Nepal Bank Limited office. The sound of the Pokhara explosion was heard kilometers away and newspapers quoted a local shopkeeper as saying, "we saw nothing but black smoke rising after the blast." Police and army units were immediately deployed to the sites for investigation.

12-Point Understanding Intact

16. (C) Politicians opined that the 12-point understanding between the Maoists and the political parties would remain intact. Jhalanath Khanal, Central Committee Member of the UML, blamed the end of the cease-fire on the government's "irresponsible behavior." Khanal said the end of the cease-fire was unfortunate because killings of civilians had decreased during the cease-fire; now "the general people" would be very badly affected, and more civilians would be killed. He stated that the 12-point understanding between the Maoists and the political parties would remain "intact," but conceded that implementation "would be difficult due to the unconducive environment."

17. (C) Similarly, Lilamani Pokharel, Vice President of the People's Front Nepal, explained that people "now have realized the government was not in a mood to establish peace," and that people would "blame the government if

bloodshed took place." He said that the 12-point understanding "would remain intact," and claimed that the Maoists would not attack the cadre of the political parties. However, he worried that cadre could become the victims of crossfire between Maoists and security forces in villages. Hridayesh Tripathi, General Secretary of the Nepal Sadbhavana Party-Anandidevi, stated that the parties had requested the Maoists to extend the cease-fire for 15 days, but because the security forces had started to take an offensive posture, it was not possible for the Maoists to extend the cease-fire. He too said that the Maoists would not attack the cadre of the political parties. However, he categorically said that "the Maoists would attack candidates who would contest the municipal election." He added that the government would try to create "misunderstanding" between the political parties and the Maoists by carrying out explosions and blaming the Maoists.

Human Rights Activists Also Blame Government

18. (C) Human rights activists also blamed the government for not reciprocating the cease-fire. Krishna Pahadi, Founding President of local NGO Human Rights and Peace Society, said that the government legitimized future Maoist violence by not reciprocating the cease-fire. He added that the security forces would not be able to go to the villages after the breaking of the cease-fire. He worried that the government had no program to address the people, causing the people to rise against the government. Subodh Pyakurel, President of local NGO Informal Sector Service Center (INSEC), also expressed regret that the government did not reciprocate the cease-fire to encourage peace. He said the Maoist leaders were pressured by their cadre to break the cease-fire, as the cadre were "facing mounting casualties." He added that peaceful movement was "in crisis," as it would be "sandwiched between the two guns." He worried that both the Maoists and the government would further curtail civil liberties.

Comment

19. (C) While Post also wishes the government would have reciprocated the cease-fire and we continue to urge the King to reach out to the Parties, lack of action on the part of the government does not give Maoists the innate right to turn to violence. The government may have stepped up military pressure on the Maoists in part to derail the ceasefire. That said, the Maoists ended their last two cease-fires with surprise attacks against government forces and the RNA's operations could thus be viewed as pre-emptive. Moreover, the "objectionable" action in Rolpa cited by the Maoists and several of the political parties involved a December 30 incident in which security forces freed 933 people whom the Maoists were using as road construction slave labor. Post believes that we must send a clear and forceful denunciation of the Maoist decision to return to violence.

Action Request

110. (U) Post requests that the department spokesperson issue a statement condemning the Maoists for ending their unilateral cease-fire and resuming violence.

Begin suggested text.

The United States is deeply concerned at the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)'s January 2 announcement of the end of their 4-month unilateral cease-fire. We condemn the Maoist bombings just hours later of government office buildings outside Kathmandu and note that civilians were in the immediate vicinity. Such indiscriminate violence is at direct odds with the Maoists' stated intention to target only what they term the royal regime. The United States has consistently called upon the Maoists to abandon violence and come into the political mainstream. The end of the cease-fire at this time is unhelpful and contrary to that goal. There can be no excuse for the resumption of violence.

The Parties themselves have said they would not form a working alliance with the Maoists unless and until the Maoists abandon violence. In that context, the recent Maoist bombings and resumption of violence undermine the premise of the November 22, 12-point understanding between the seven-party alliance and the Maoists.

We call on the Palace to urgently reach out to the political parties and find a way back to democracy before the country slides into chaos and violence. A multi-party democracy with full respect for civil liberties and human rights is necessary to bring lasting peace to Nepal.

End suggested text.
MORIARTY